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AGO ltr 29 Apr 1980

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AD825119

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 11TH TRANSPORTATION BATTALION (TERMINAL)
APO 96307

AVCA TC-XB-CO

10 November 1966

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period
Ending 31 October 1966 (RCS CSFO-65)

THRU: Commanding Officer
4th Transportation Command
ATTN: AVCA TC-GL
APO 96307

Commanding General
1st Logistical Command
APO 96307

Commanding General
United States Army, Viet-Nam
ATTN: AVCA-DH
APO 96307

Commanding General
United States Army, Pacific
ATTN: GPOP-MH
APO 96558

TO: Headquarters, Department of the Army
ATTN: ACSFOR
Washington, D. C. 20310

DDC

JAN 16 1968

STATEMENT #8 UNCLASSIFIED

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Asst. Chief of Staff for
Dept. of Army
JAN 16 1968

Section 1 - Significant Organizational Activities

During the report period aspects of the battalion mission changed considerably. With the assumption of the responsibility for discharging US Air Force Express Ammunition Vessels at Nha Be on 10 September 1966, the battalion ~~now~~ has the mission for the discharge and delivery to first consignee of all ammunition in the III Corps Area. By relieving the Air Force of this responsibility, the need for them to maintain their water terminal distribution system was eliminated.

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At the same time the mission was absorbed into the existing ammunition distribution system of the battalion without significant increase of personnel or facilities.

On 25 September 1966 the main elements of the 117th Transportation Company (Terminal Service) displaced to Cat Lai, a Vietnamese Arsenal approximately 10 miles from Saigon. This was the first unit to move into the area which is projected to be the base camp for the majority of the battalion, thereby reducing troop congestion in Saigon. The 117th Transportation Company was given the mission of initiating construction of the base camp. As of 31 October the unit was fully established at Cat Lai and was preparing areas and facilities for other elements of the battalion.

During this period the 117th Transportation Company turned over the responsibility for operating the general cargo barge discharge sites at Thu Duc and Newport to the 71st Transportation Battalion (Terminal), a newly arrived organization within the 4th Transportation Command. However, this loss of mission was counterbalanced on 11 October 1966 when the company began operating the K-12 pier in Saigon Port. This is a deep draft pier facility which included an intransit... storage warehouse and is operated using contractor furnished stevedores with military supervision and documentation responsibility. The K-12 pier has averaged 797.8 short tons discharged per day for a total of 18,348.6 short tons discharged. During this first month of operation the 117th Transportation Company personnel established a new tonnage record for a single day's discharge in Saigon Port, 3,220.0 tons.

In October the 402nd Transportation Company (Terminal Transfer) joined the battalion from Fort Campbell, Kentucky where it had been activated. It moved into Cat Lai and initially had the responsibility of working with the 117th Transportation Company in constructing a base camp. Unit equipment did not arrive during the reporting period. Shortly after the unit's arrival, the 4th Transportation Command directed that two officers and 137 enlisted positions of the company be attached, for all purposes, to the 125th Terminal Command. The remaining 3 officers and 122 enlisted positions remained under battalion control.

During the period of 1 August to 3 October the 124th Transportation Company (Terminal Service) continued its main mission of operating the ammunition discharge sites of Nha Be, Cogido, Binh Trieu, Buu Long and Thanh Tuy Ha. Operational sites during this period handled the following quantities (short tons) for the various sites.

<u>SITE</u>	<u>AUGUST</u>	<u>SEPTEMBER</u>	<u>OCTOBER</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Nha Be	43,125	38,701	37,078	111,904
Cogido	15,224	20,448	15,730	51,442
Buu Long	4,361	3,230	5,125	12,716
Binh Trieu	5,242	4,325	2,737	12,304
Thanh Tuy Ha	10,131	3,587	5,104	18,222
TOTAL	78,083	70,331	75,774	214,188

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An additional mission assigned to the 124th Transportation Company was the POL barge operation at Nha Be. Barges are backloaded with drums of POL from the Shell and Esso storage facilities at Nha Be and shipped to various coastal ports.

The 124th Transportation Company also furnished three - eleven man stevedore gangs to off-load cargo from the Baton Rouge Victory. This general cargo ship was mined on 22 August in the Saigon River. The first crew departed on 24 August and crews were rotated with two crews working and one crew off until 31 August.

The 124th Transportation Company was tasked with the mission of discharging priority cargo during this operation which became complex because of hostile fire during hours of darkness which required a stoppage of discharge at night. Discharge operations were discontinued when the ship's position and tidal currents required its relocation to a safer haven at Vung Tau for complete off-loading.

In August, the 1099th Transportation Company (Medium Boat) had an average of fourteen LCMS's daily for moving barges in the 11th Transportation Battalion (Terminal) Ammunition System. Most of these boats worked in pairs and yielded one loaded barge moved forward, and one empty back-hauled. Through an increase in static commitments, September's boat availability to the ammunition system dropped to eleven vessels. However, refinement of management and use of turn around techniques on small barge short hauls yielded a significant tonnage increase. The presence of additional tug boats provided a partial relief for ammunition movements and resulted in a drop in tonnage for October. Presently there are two 45' tugs and two 65' tugs for the transportation of barges in the ammunition system. Cargo operations in the reporting quarter reflect a change in the mission of the 1099th Transportation Company. Tonnage figures are:

August	88,325
September	99,281
October (est)	50,000

Support maintenance for landing craft continues to be unsatisfactory as this report period ends. The THAI American Engineering Firm, a civilian contractor, has held LCM 8146 for 115 days. Originally placed on contract after an engine room fire, the boat is now having one band of engines rebuilt because the contractor did not carry out periodic exercise of engines, resulting in a freeze up of working parts. One serious deficiency in maintenance facilities is a means and location for removing boats from the water which has been temporarily solved by placing boats aboard flat-decked barges. Inspection and care of the hull out of the water has proved to be a vital part of preventive maintenance.

Six LCM6 boats were assigned to this unit in October, bringing the number of vessels to 32, the balance being LCMS's. Operator

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training is in progress and use of the LCM 6 has been limited to administrative ferry services. In August the 1099th Transportation Company moved from tentage into contractor-constructed huts at Camp Davies.

This unit was recognized 20 September 1966 by the National Defense Transportation Association as the most outstanding US Army transportation unit in Viet-Nam. Visits to the unit during the quarter were made by the US Army Vice Chief of Staff and the Deputy USARPAC Commander.

During the report period the 329th Transportation Company (Heavy Boat) conducted fourteen Logistical Support Missions to various points in the Mekong Delta, one to Cam Ranh Bay and one to Con Son Island. Effective 20 August 66 this unit has been providing logistical support three days each week for the Australian units at Ba Ria.

On 4 September 66, LCU 1534 was committed to support units of the 1st Infantry Division engaged in "Operation Baton Rouge". The first operation was conducted on 21 September 66, but was not successful due to hydrographic conditions at the proposed beaching site:

- a. Water depth could not accomodate vessel.
- b. Fishing stakes extended almost the entire shore line.

Support operations have been discontinued until conditions are more favorable for vessel support.

Total tonnage and passengers transported during the quarter from 1 August 66 to 31 October 66 were as follows:

General Cargo - 30,565 ST

Ammunition - 30,500 ST

Passengers - 7,000

The cargo handling vessel deadline rate for the quarter was 5%.

In September a Can Dock Pier was constructed at Vung Tau in conjunction with the Alaska Barge and Transport Company for the purpose of mooring small craft.

On 15 August 66, 15 electric forklifts were placed on a barge at Nha Be for use in discharging and backloading ammunition from ship to barge and vice-versa. In addition, 40 electric batteries, one 30 kilowatt generator and four battery chargers were installed on the barge to sustain operations. Since introducing this equipment, a definite decrease in cargo damage has been realized. The Vietnamese stevedore companies utilized in discharging the cargo provide the forklift operators.

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As a result of inexperience of these drivers there has been a high deadline rate of forklifts; however, as the drivers become more familiar with the equipment, this deadline rate has decreased. In summary, the introduction of this equipment has been most advantageous insofar as the ammunition discharge system is concerned.

At the present time, barge capacity of barges utilized in the ammunition system (discounting barges in repair) amounts to 33,000 deadweight tons. This is compared to 27,000 deadweight ton capacity (discounting barges in repair) that was present in the system for August.

On 23 September a Medical Team from the 74th Medical Battalion was attached to 11th Transportation Battalion. This Medical Detachment consists of one officer and five enlisted men. The purpose of this Medical Detachment is the support of the 11th Transportation Battalion at Cat Lai due to the relative inaccessability of the camp.

Due to the geographical locations of the different units of the battalion and because of the magnitude of their dispersion, there was a heavy load placed on the Battalion Chaplain. There are three Protestant worship services now being held; two at Cat Lai and one in Saigon Port at the 124th Transportation Company area, in addition to services being held on LCM's and LCU's when opportunity is available to the chaplain.

Changes of key personnel in this command included the replacement of Major (now LTC) James Fleming, the Battalion Commander by LTC Thomas H Hoy in a Change of Command ceremony conducted at Cat Lai on 18 September 1966. Captain Arthur V. Hull replaced Captain Ronald H Wilbanks in S-3 as Battalion Operations Officer. In August, Captains Tamison H Moore and Phillip L. Chaplos assumed command of the 1099th Transportation Company and the 329th Transportation Company respectively. The battalion also welcomed the arrival of Chaplain (Captain) Verne A Slighter.

Section 2 - Part I Observations (Lessons Learned)

1. Personnel

a. Item: Rapid turnover of personnel

Discussion: The rapid turnover of personnel who arrived with the 1099th, 117th, and 124th Transportation Companies has created a critical problem in replacement.

Observation: While vacancies in the lower ranks can be filled by unskilled personnel, the lack of middle management supervisors will be a limiting factor. Although junior NCO's from the combat arms branches are being assigned, until they are conversant in terminal port operation, productivity will fluctuate.

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2. Operations

a. Item: Utilization of hatch-type barges

Discussion: Utilization of hatch-type barges whose hatch covers are not capable of being manipulated manually or whose covers are of a pilferable nature, present a definite problem.

Observation: Three types of barges are utilized in the ammunition system. One type is the BC (flat deck) barge, one is Luzon (well type) barges with either metal hatch covers or tarpaulion covers, and thirdly, locally procured contractor barges, which are well type, manned by local nationals, and contain covers that can be placed on the hatches by two individuals. The BC barges are best suited for the ammunition system due to the palletized nature of almost all the munitions. The hatch-type barges, particularly the Luzon type, are less desirable due to the broken storage caused by hatch opening and the problems associated with hatch covers. There is a periodic requirement for well type barges in the system for loose cargo. However, the contractor barges are better suited due to the ease of covering the barges, the fact that less space is lost in the hatches, and the fact that they are manned so that maintenance is continuous and pilferage of barge gear is less likely to occur. Another advantage of the contractor well type barges compared to the Luzon barges is the ease of maneuverability in towing.

b. Item: Occasional poor performance of the ammunition movements contractor.

Discussion: On several occasions the contractor has not provided the necessary equipment to effectively accomplish the mission of moving munitions. Lack of tug boats and trucks are the most frequent deficiencies.

Observation: When this occurs, equipment is provided by the US Army or another contractor. The loss of revenue has prompted the prime contractor to correct equipment shortages.

c. Item: Movement capability for transporting barges of munitions from origin to destination.

Discussion: Commencing on 3 October 66, two 65' tug boats were assigned on a static basis for movement of ammunition barges. In addition, two 45' tug boats were placed on static commitment to the ammunition system. Presently, one 45' tugboat is static at Cogido, one 45' tug boat and one 65' tug boat are static at Nha Be, and one 65' tug boat is utilized for towing barges between Nha Be and Cogido.

Observation: The 65' tug boat tows loaded barges from Nha Be to the Long Binh Bridge. Due to low overhead clearance, a 45' tug boat must pick up the barges at this location and complete the tow to Cogido. This factor combined with extreme tides which effect both speed of movement and depth of water has resulted in considerable loss in movement efficiency and ineffective use of this valuable piece of equipment.

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3. Training and Organization

a. Item: Lack of TO&E spaces for radio repairmen.

Discussion: Latest TO&E for terminal service battalion, TO&E 55-116E does not authorize spaces for radio repairmen since new series radios are not authorized second echelon repair. This means that installation is third echelon also. This has proved unworkable. There are over 100 radios operating in this battalion, over 50% of the failures occur at night and must be repaired immediately because of the importance of the radio net. Third echelon cannot support this operation nor can they install new series radios.

Observation: Although this is a mission of third echelon maintenance, they do not have the facilities to support this battalion. To enable this battalion to maintain operations, TO&E 55-116E should be changed to include spaces for radio repairmen.

4. Intelligence

a. Item: Flood water river stages

Discussion: The Dong Nai River, a main artery in the ammunition barge system, went through radical tidal changes during September and early October as flood waters moved down stream.

Observation: Excessive high tides and prolonged backup of runoff resulted in strong currents, and limited movements under bridges. Adequate river forecasting information is not available to plan effects of flood water and tides on the Dong Nai.

b. Item: VC mortar and mine attacks on landing craft

Discussion: In September, two efforts were made by VC to disrupt LCM movements of ammunition barges. In a mortar attack on two barges by three boats, fire was "walked" out into the channel from a known point on the shore. A mine placed below the surface of the water in a known channel was detonated under another barge underway.

Observation: Both incidents indicate the VC requirement for an observer close to the river bank who can control fire or detonate the explosives. Mortar fire was ineffective because adjustment did not come close to meeting full speed of an LCM. The mine was ineffective because it contained insufficient explosive to either provide secondary explosion or cause a hole in the barge.

5. Logistics

a. Item: Deck mounting armament on LCM

Discussion: Requests for .50 caliber machine gun pedestal mounts revealed that demand far exceeds supply, and the gun is ineffective on a boat without stable mounting.

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Observation: Two inch pipe and steel bracing can be used to fabricate mounts. Installation on the soft patch outboard of the pilot house requires less than two hours of welding. A sand bag parapet can be built to protect the gunner.

b. Item: For radio installation

Discussion: AN/VRC 10 radios installed on LCMS's developed an excessive amount of power supply failure, which were traced to polarity difference between radio wiring system and hull polarity. LCMS's hulls originally designed to be neutral have developed positive polarity because of deterioration in electrical wiring systems.

Observation: Polarity difference could not be neutralized at this level due to the lack of equipment and experienced personnel. Steps to correct this situation have been taken in that the boats are being phased through Marine Maintenance Support elements, Cam Ranh. As interim steps, wooden blocks have been used to insulate FM radios coupled with 500 OHM capacitor in lieu of this ground strap on the AB-15 antenna base allowing the FM radios to function without trouble.

c. Item: Tubeless tire repair kits

Discussion: Tubeless tire repair kits remain in critical short supply in Viet Nam.

Observation: There exists an extreme equipment deadline due to the lack of these repair kits.

d. Item: M-5 Ointment

Discussion: The M-5 ointment in the M-17 carrying case has been noted leaking in a majority of cases.

Observation: The majority of leaks are caused by the hot, moist climate such that exists in Viet Nam.

e. Item: Worn shear on M-14 rifles

Discussion: Inspections have noted many worn shears on the M-14.

Observation: Frequent inspections should be conducted especially on rifles carried daily but not fired.

f. Item: Fire unit M-37

Discussion: Carbon accumulated rapidly in the flame valves of the M-37 fire unit.

Observation: The combination of hot, moist climate and relatively low grade gas has resulted in carbon accumulation on the flame valve.

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g. Item: Grounds of boat electrical system

Discussion: Many boats have developed positive ground electrical circuit. When radios are turned on they burn out all wiring between radios and power source. If it is raining, chances are excellent that anyone wiring a bulkhead will be electrocuted and that the boat will burn.

Observation: Boat electrical systems need checking especially around lights, to insure negative grounds.

h. Item: Power pulse filters.

Discussion: Almost all radios must be run by generator. Generators are overworked and tend to run ragged. Consequently, electrical current produced is a pulse rather than a steady current. This electrical current is sufficient to burn out a radio.

Observation: Adequate filters should be obtained to protect radios from power pulses.

Section 2 - Part II Recommendations

1. Personnel

a. Recommendation: That CONUS schooling be increased to provide trained replacement personnel.

2. Operations

a. Recommendation: That BC barges replace the Luzon barges as soon as possible and that necessary well type barges be provided by the present contractor as required.

b. Recommendation: To continue substituting equipment for extended periods of time until the contractor realizes the monetary loss he suffers when his equipment is not utilized. Termination of the contract is not recommended at this time due to the fact that equipment furnished by the contractor cannot be wholly replaced on a permanent basis.

c. Recommendation: That the 65' tug be modified so as to permit it to go under low clearances, to the point of destination or that an additional 45' tug be assigned to the discharge site.

3. Training and Organization

a. Recommendation: TO&E 55-116E should be changed to include spaces for two E-5 and one E-4 radio repairmen. MOS 31B20.

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4. Intelligence

a. Recommendation: That river intelligence including flood forecasting and common current tables, be developed for streams considered vital to the U.S. inland waterway operations.

b. Recommendation: That river security forces place special effort and patrolling on the immediate bank areas to discourage VC mine control teams.

5. Logistics

a. Recommendation: When landing craft require defensive or offensive support armament, it is recommended that a unit-applied modification work order be authorized for machine gun mounts. Both M-60 and .50 caliber guns can be mounted on the same locally fabricated mount.

b. Recommendation: That a study be made of induced hull polarity in landing craft, and that pending results of the study, users be advised of the need for insulation of FM equipment to prevent damages. Experiments with VRC-12 faulty radios have shown insulation can be accomplished without use of the capacitor required on VRC-10 antenna base.

c. Recommendation: Units on alert for Viet-Nam should insure bringing tubeless tire repair kits.

d. Recommendation: Frequent inspections are required and the defective containers replaced.

e. Recommendation: All personnel should be instructed to on how to determine if the shear is worn.

f. Recommendation: The necessity exists to clean valves on the M-37 fire unit with emery or sand paper on a daily basis.

g. Recommendation: Electrical systems on all boats should be checked regularly by qualified marine electricians to insure negative grounds.

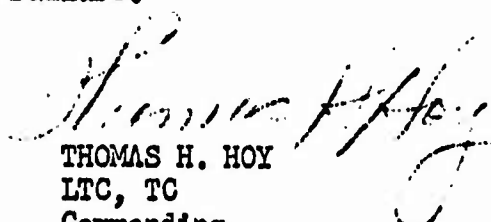
h. Recommendation: BA 433, 24 volt storage battery is an excellent filter which can easily be wired in between radios and generators.

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Additional advantages are that batteries supply adequate amperage which not all generators do, and batteries supply an emergency power source in case of generator failure.


THOMAS H. HOY
LTC, TC
Commanding

AVCA-TC-GCP (10 Nov 66)

1st Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period Ending
31 October 1966. (RCS CSFOR-65)

HEADQUARTERS, 4TH TRANSPORTATION COMMAND, APO 96307 29 NOV 1966

TO: Commanding General, 1st Logistical Command, ATTN: AVCA GO-O, APO
96307

1. The Quarterly Operational Report of the 11th Transportation Battalion (Terminal) has been reviewed and presents an adequate description of their operations and problems encountered therein during the previous quarter.

2. The following comments are based on the Observations (Lessons Learned) and Recommendations contained in the basic letter and are referred to the specific paragraph in Section 2 in which they are mentioned:

a. Reference Part 1 and 2, Paragraph 1. The 1st Logistical Command has been made aware of this problem by command letter. This headquarters can not take any additional action such as reassignment within units of command since there is a shortage of qualified NCO's in the MOS 56E40 command wide. As mentioned in the Quarterly Operational Report (Lessons Learned) submitted by this command, NCO's in Infantry and Armor MOS's have been assigned, but are not effective until completion of limited formal schooling and a period of OJT, given within the command.

b. Reference Part 1 and 2, Paragraph 2a. At the present time there are 55 BC type barges due out to this command. As these barges become available, it is anticipated that the barges provided by Luzon Stevedoring Company will be phased out of the operation.

c. Reference Part 1 and 2, Paragraph 2b. A new contract has been issued by 1st Logistical Command. The new contract is a service contract, wherein, non-performance results in monies being deducted from the amount due to the contractor.

d. Reference Part 1 and 2, Paragraph 2c. The observation is partially correct in that the low clearance prevents five of the six assigned 65' tugs from passing under the bridge. A modified 65' tug with barges passed under the bridge on 21, 22 and 25 November, however, due to shallow water north of the bridge, the tug was unable to reach the discharge site without going aground, therefore, the 65' tug still can not perform the desired mission. At present an additional 45' tug is not available for this mission. Further it is planned to place a bouy south of the bridge to assist in transferring barges between 65' and 45' tugs.

e. Reference Part 1 and 2, Paragraph 3. This headquarters has received a letter from the 11th Transportation Battalion requesting additional repairmen. The request is being reviewed at this headquarters and, if justified, will be submitted to the 1st Logistical Command in the form of an MTOE.

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AVCA-TC-GCP (10 Nov 66)

29 NOV 1966

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f. Reference Part 1 and 2, Paragraph 4a. The G-2, this headquarters, is developing the river intelligence desired.

g. Reference Part 1 and 2, Paragraph 4b. River security is a function of the Vietnamese Navy or the sector force through which the river flows. Operations have been conducted by the above mentioned forces in the areas in which the LCM's received fire, resulting in a reduction in the types of attacks mentioned.

h. Reference Part 1 and 2, Paragraph 5a. Both the observation and the recommendation are valid and mounts have been installed where required.


i. Reference Part 1 and 2, Paragraph 5b. This problem as stated exists and vessels have been scheduled through United States Army Marine Maintenance Activity, Vietnam facilities for correction.

j. Reference Part 1 and 2, Paragraph 5c. The problem as stated and the recommendation is valid. Requisitions have been submitted for the item, but delivery date is unknown.

k. Reference Part 1 and 2, Paragraphs 2d, e, f, g, and h. The problems as stated do exist and the recommendations are valid. Command directives have been issued alerting units to the problems and instructing corrective action to be taken.

3. Two copies of this report have been indorsed directly to ACSFOR, DA as prescribed in paragraph 6b, Appendix II, USARV Regulation 870-2, dated 19 July 1966.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


B. D. SEIBOLD
1LT, AGC
Asst Adjutant General

TEL: Saigon Port 121/238

AVCA GO-O (10 Nov 66)

2d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October
1966 (RCS CSFOR-65)

Headquarters, 1st Logistical Command, APO 96307 4 DEC 1966

TO: Deputy Commanding General, United States Army, Vietnam, ATTN:
AVHGC-DH, APO 96307

1. The Operational Report - Lessons Learned submitted by the 11th Transportation Battalion (Terminal) for the quarter ending 31 October 1966 is forwarded herewith.

2. The 11th Transportation Battalion engaged in combat support operations for 92 days during the reporting period.

3. Concur with the report as modified by the preceding indorsement. The report is considered adequate.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

TEL: LYNX 782/930



GLENN A. DOYLE
Capt, AGC
Asst. AG

AVNGC-DH (10 Nov 66)

3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the Period Ending
31 October 1966 (RCS CSTOR-65)

15 DEC '66

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96307

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOF-OT
ATO 96558

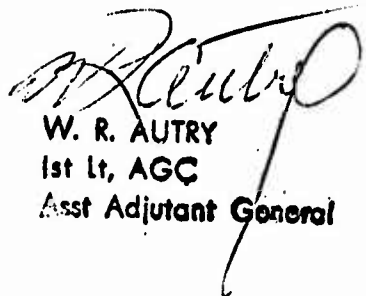
1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the period ending 31 October 1966 from Headquarters, 11th Transportation Battalion (Terminal) as indorsed.

2. Pertinent comments are as follows:

a. Reference Paragraph 5c, Part I, Section 2, Page 8: Tubeless tire repair kits are in short supply. As an expedient to alleviate this situation, the next command maintenance newsletter published by this headquarters will contain instructions on field repair of tubeless tires by application of inner tube patches to the inside of the tire.

b. Reference Paragraph 5d, Part I, Section 2, Page 8: An investigation has been initiated into the causes for M5 ointment leaking from the M-17 carrying case. Pending completion of this investigation, the 11th Transportation Battalion (Terminal) has been instructed to turn in defective units and obtain replacements.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


W. R. AUTRY

1st Lt, AGC

Asst Adjutant General

GPOP-OT (10 Nov 66) 4th Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the Period Ending
31 October 1966 (RCS CSFOR-65)

HQ, US ARMY, PACIFIC, APO San Francisco 96558 31 DEC 1966

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters concurs in the basic report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:



L. L. CHAPPELL
MAJ, AGC
Asst AG